

Proclamation 6395 of December 17, 1991

Basketball Centennial Day, 1991

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

When Dr. James Naismith invented basketball a century ago, he could not have envisioned what would become of the simple game he had devised to entertain his students between the fall football and spring baseball seasons. Today the uniquely American game of basketball is one of the fastest paced and most widely popular team sports in the world.

Dr. Naismith's brainchild has changed dramatically since a janitor helped him hang peach baskets at each end of the gymnasium at the International Young Men's Christian Association Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. Once played primarily at YMCA facilities, basketball now boasts players and fans around the globe. Breakaway rims and gravity-defying jump shots have replaced the one-handed set shot into wooden receptacles; three-point goals now reward players who can shoot accurately from long range; and more and more women are taking up the game at all levels of competition.

Each of these changes has made basketball more exciting to watch, expanding its appeal to people of all ages and all walks of life. Indeed, few sporting events generate more spirited rivalries than a high school state basketball championship, the NCAA 64-team tournament, or the NBA Finals. Since 1904, when it was introduced as a demonstration sport, basketball has also been a thrilling part of the Olympics. The United States is proud of the many Olympic titles that have been brought home by our American teams, including the 1984 Women's Gold Medal.

In every city and town across the United States, playgrounds and gymnasiums are filled with youngsters who dream of success on the hardwood. However, whether one aspires to play professional ball or simply hopes to win a friendly pickup game, anyone who spends time on the court knows the importance of mastering the fundamentals: dribbling, passing, shooting, and rebounding. Once these skills are developed, an athlete must then learn to coordinate his or her game with the other four players on a squad. This combination of individual achievement and teamwork is what makes the game of basketball both fascinating and rewarding. The great college coach, John Wooden, may have said it best when he explained:

In basketball, we meet adversity head on. It's so much like life itself: the ups and downs, the obstacles—they make you strong. A coach is a teacher, and like any good teacher, I'm trying to build men.

Like all sports, basketball not only promotes physical health and fitness but also fosters virtues that serve players well on and off the court. On this occasion, we proudly celebrate the 100th anniversary of this uniquely American game.

The Congress, by Public Law 102-210, has designated December 21, 1991, as "Basketball Centennial Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 21, 1991, as Basketball Centennial Day. I invite all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6396 of December 20, 1991

National Law Enforcement Training Week, 1992

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

High-quality training is an essential component of effective law enforcement. The dedicated men and women who serve in this field have sworn to uphold the constitutional rights of individuals while promoting and defending the public safety. Meeting that challenge requires that every officer—from the rookie on the street to the most experienced chief or investigator—be equipped with certain knowledge and skills.

Today law enforcement training is as rigorous and as wide-ranging in scope as the day-to-day demands of an officer's job. First, every man and woman behind the badge must have knowledge of the law itself, including the rules of proper conduct and procedure. Because their work places them on the front lines in the war against drugs and crime, law enforcement officers also devote many hours of study and practice to self-defense techniques and to the safe use of firearms. Basic law enforcement training also includes physical conditioning, as well as lessons and exercises in the administration of first aid. Whether they are called to the scene of an accident or to the site of a violent domestic dispute, law enforcement officers know that lives depend on their preparedness and skill.

While the fundamentals have remained the same, recent advances in science and technology have changed many aspects of law enforcement and law enforcement training. To fight back against increasingly sophisticated crimes, police officers and other law enforcement agents are employing increasingly sophisticated tools and methods, from computers and toxicology to genetic "fingerprinting" and psychological profiling. Thus, those individuals who provide law enforcement training—including continuing education for veteran personnel—are part of a large, multidisciplinary team of professionals.

This week, as we gratefully salute all those who conduct and participate in law enforcement training, we also acknowledge the many rewarding career opportunities that it offers through its related disci-